

ACTION NEA-00

INFO	LOG-00	NP-00	AID-00	ACQ-00	CIAE-00	DODE-00	EB-00
	EUR-00	VC-00	TEDE-00	INR-00	IO-00	L-00	VCE-00
	AC-00	NSAE-00	NSCE-00	OIC-00	OMB-00	PA-00	PM-00
	PRS-00	ACE-00	P-00	SCT-00	SP-00	SS-00	STR-00
	TRSE-00	T-00	SA-00	IIP-00	PMB-00	PRM-00	DRL-00
	G-00	SAS-00	/000W				

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FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1286

INFO ARAB ISRAELI COLLECTIVE

AMEMBASSY BERLIN

AMEMBASSY RABAT

CIA WASHDC

RELEASED IN PART
B1, 1.4(B), 1.4(D)

C O N F I D E N T I A L DAMASCUS 001945

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/18/2015

TAGS: PGOV, PHUM, PTER, SY

SUBJECT: FAMILY SEEKS RELEASE OF SEPTEMBER 11 RECRUITER

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires Stephen Seche for reasons 1.4b/d.

1. (C) SUMMARY: The family of Mohammed Haydar Zammar, who allegedly recruited three of the September 11 hijackers in Germany, is calling on the German Foreign Ministry to help release him from a Syrian jail. Zammar, a dual Syrian-German citizen, has been detained without any charges against him since June 2002 and is reportedly being tortured. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] END SUMMARY.

HAMBURG CELL

2. (C) Mohammed Haydar Zammar is widely believed to have recruited September 11 hijackers Mohammed Atta, Ziad Jarrah, and Marwan al-Shehhi in Hamburg, Germany, according to press reports. After recruiting the men, Zammar allegedly introduced them to al-Qaida members from Afghanistan, where they would later receive preliminary training for the September 11 attack. Zammar was questioned by German authorities after the attack but was freed because of a lack of evidence. In October 2001, he traveled to Morocco where he was arrested in December. In June 2002, he was turned over to the SARG, although the circumstances of his transfer

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are unclear. It has been reported by Amnesty International (AI) and the British-based newspaper The Guardian that Zammar was transferred from Morocco to Syria, using a plane registered in North Carolina, although neither say if US officials were involved in the transfer. (NOTE: Zammar is forty-four years old. He was born in Syria and is a naturalized German citizen.)

ZAMMAR,S WIFE PLEADS FOR HIS RETURN

3. (C) Zammar,s wife and family have not seen him since he left for Morocco in 2001. They claim he is being held and tortured in Syria. The family and various human rights groups say he is being held at the Palestinian Branch of the Political Security Directorate in Damascus, although some believe that he was moved from Damascus in October 2004 to an undisclosed location. A recently released detainee from the Palestinian Branch said, according to an AI report, that the last time he saw Zammar was in October 2004, adding that he believed Zammar was frequently tortured and looked skeletal.8 The prisoner also said that Zammar would yell to the prison guards that he was a German citizen and wanted to see a representative from the German Embassy; the guards would ignore him, according to the prisoner.

4. (C) Zammar,s wife has now hired a German attorney, Guel Pinar, in order to seek his release. She has twice asked the SARG, via the German Embassy and German Foreign Ministry, for permission to visit him but was told that it is an internal matter since he is a Syrian citizen.

GERMAN EMBASSY,S ROLE

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